Pest Update (June 1, 2011)

Vol. 9, no. 15

John Ball, Forest Health Specialist, Extension Forester

Email: john.ball@sdstate.edu
Phone: 605-688-4737
Samples sent to: John Ball
Horticulture, Forestry, Landscape and Parks
Rm 201, Northern Plains Biostress Lab
North Campus Lane
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD 57007-0996

Note: samples containing living tissue may only be accepted from South Dakota. Please do not send samples of dying plants or insects from other states. If you live outside of South Dakota and have a question, instead please send a digital picture of the pest or problem. **Walnut samples may not be sent in from any location – please provide a picture!**

Available on the net at:
http://sdda.sd.gov/Forestry/Educational-Information/PestAlert-Archives.aspx

In this issue **pg**

Plant development

We are still behind in normal plant development. The catalpas should be blooming now but in Brookings the leaves on the catalpa have barely opened yet this year. The weather will be hot this week but another cool-down on later may still keep the plants from catching up.

Tasks to complete now

Clearwing ash borer treatment with an insecticide containing permethrin as an active ingredient can begin now. The adults are usually out flying about a week or so after Vanhouttee spireas begin to blooms and these shrubs are in flower. You know when the adults are flying out from an infested tree by the papery pupal skins and sawdust left in or around the emergent hole.

Diplodia tip blight treatments should be started now. This is probably the most common disease of pines, particularly Austrian pine. Symptoms in early summer are the new needles becoming brown and stunted. Twigs may be infected and become stunted and deformed. The treatment is a fungicide containing thiophanate-methyl, propriconazole or chlorothalonil just before the buds sheaths have opened, timing is critical, and repeat the treatment in 10 to 14 days. The bud sheaths are just beginning to open now throughout the state so try to get the first application on in the next week.

Dothistroma treatments should also be started now. This is a very common disease of Austrian pines this year (also ponderosa pines in East River shelterbelts) and is responsible for most of the discolored pines we are seeing. The symptoms are dead needle tips beyond the yellow to tan spots. The spots have now enlarged to form brown to reddish brown bands and sometimes fruiting structures can be seen in the bands. The infection this year is so bad that the entire needle may be discolored. The treatment is a copper fungicide applied now as the candles are expanding and repeated in late June and again in mid-July. There are a number of copper containing fungicides available such as Camelot for those individuals who have to spray several or more trees.

Chlorothalonil-based fungicides have shown effectiveness for treating the disease but are not registered for this use.

Tent caterpillars are getting bigger! Tent caterpillars, eastern, forest and western, are common defoliators of mountainash, cherry, crabapples and plums. The insects have reached a size where most forms of natural controls such as breaking open the nest to allow predators and parasites to enter, are no longer effective. Once the larvae become larger, more than 1-inch long, insecticides containing carbaryl, or malathion are the treatments of choice.

Tasks to do in another week…

Codling moth – the larvae of this insect burrow into the apple, usually near the base of the fruit, resulting in a trail through the apple filled with brown, powdery frass. This frass often extrudes from the entry hole. Treatment is usually an application of malathion sprayed about 10 days after petal fall and then 3 more applications spaced about 10 days apart. Do not spray insecticides on apple trees while they are in bloom! You will kill the pollinators. If you are using a general fruit multi-purpose spray, it probably has an insecticide in it so these sprays should also not be applied during bloom.

We should be shearing pines soon. Pines only set terminal buds, not along the new shoots as do spruce and fir, so the only time to shear them – removal of a portion of the current season's growth - is during the candle phase where the expanding new shoot is still tender. Removal of a portion of the shoot during this time period will still permit the new shoot to set buds. If the pine is sheared after the new growth has completed expansion and has hardened, no buds will be set and the shoot will die back after the older needles are shed, usually in a couple of years. Wait until the new needles along the candle are about ½ the size of the older needles and shear then that should be next week for much of the state.

E-samples

Each spring for about the last 3 or 4 years, we have seen **pine sawfly** appearing on ponderosa pine in the southern Hills. With the exception of a few spots, the infestations have not become widespread but instead are occurring on a few stands of pines here and there. Dave, a forester for the Department of Agriculture, down in Hot Springs, took this picture of some recently hatched sawfly larvae. The larvae feed on the older foliage and the lost of these needles can leave the canopy appearing very thin and the tree weakened as its capability to photosynthesis is much reduced. The insects feed in clusters and will move in unison if disturbed. They can be easily treated with a number of commonly available insecticides and even a high-pressure stream of water will knock them off of a young tree.

Anthracnose of ash, maple and oaks is beginning to express symptoms. These foliage fungal diseases often appear following cool, moist springs, a perfect description of this past April and May. The infections result in stunted foliage and premature defoliation, in fact ash, maples and oaks are already beginning to drop their leaves. The foliage will often be light green to yellow green and blacked along the margins as can be seen in the picture of the maple above or sometimes distorted with black blotches as can be seen in ash to the right. At this time of year there is no control, other than to rake up the falling leaves. They can be treated with a fungicide containing chlorothalonil as the buds swell and then another treatment 10 days later but this treatment window has already passed.

Lecanium scale samples are appearing now. I have had a number of people notice these hardened red to brown shells clustered along the branches of their maples, hackberries and elms. The leaves surrounding these infested branches are often sticky as well as the ground beneath the

tree and this is from honeydew, a sweet substance excreted by soft scales as they feed. The eggs should be hatching soon, about the time lindens are in bloom, and the newly hatched young, called crawlers, are vulnerable to pesticide sprays as they are not covered with a hard shell yet. The other method of pesticide delivery is as a soil drench with a product containing imidaclorid. However this must be applied at least 30 days before control is needed so it should have been applied in May or earlier to ensure good distribution through the tree.

Samples received

Yankton County **Two samples from Sean, one is an oak that is dropping its leaves and the second is a dead Debra maple.**

The leaf drop on the oak is due to oak anthracnose; see the comments under anthracnose for more information.

The Debra maple, a cultivar of Norway maple, died due to lack of winter hardiness. This past winter was harder on tree than most people realize and we had a number of marginally hardy plants – and most Norway maple cultivars fall within that category – either suffer extensive dieback or death following this past winter.